

FBIS**DAILY REPORT
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REPORTAGE ON ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE

Delegations Arrive in Islamabad

BK160412 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 May 80

[Text] All preparations for the Islamic foreign ministers conference opening in Islamabad tomorrow have been completed. The conference agenda has been finalized and most of the delegates participating in the conference have reached Islamabad. More delegations have arrived in the federal capital for the conference. Foreign ministers of 16 more countries are due to arrive in Islamabad today: namely, those from Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Lebanon, Malaysia, Iran, Indonesia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, Mauritania, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Bahrain, Comoros, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia.

The secretary general of the Rabbta-ye 'Alam-e Islami [Muslim World League], Sheykh Muhammad 'Ali (al-Harkan), has called on all Islamic states to provide wholehearted support and assistance to Pakistan in view of the difficult situation it faces following the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Before leaving Karachi for Islamabad yesterday to attend the Islamic foreign ministers conference, he said it has become more imperative for Islamic states to come forward to help Pakistan following its decision to reject U.S. assistance. He expressed the hope that in the light of the Afghanistan situation, the conference will have a great effect by drawing the Islamic world's attention to the problems faced by Pakistan.

Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Nasir Qaddumi told newsmen following his arrival in Islamabad yesterday that the whole world recognizes the important role being played by Pakistan for the just cause of the Arabs and the Palestinian people. He said he is confident that the Islamic foreign ministers conference will play an important role in the solution of problems facing the Islamic world. In reply to a question, he said Afghanistan has made no approach to Syria for the restoration of its membership in the Islamic Conference. He said the Afghan issue can be resolved peacefully.

Leader of the PLO delegation, 'Abdal-Muhsin Abu al-Mihfal, said on arrival last night that the Islamic world considers Palestine and Jerusalem as the most crucial issues. He said the PLO will put forward some proposals during the conference in regard to the problems faced by the Islamic world. In reply to a question, he said the PLO will support any idea which can keep this region free from foreign influence.

Further Delegations Arrive

BK151122 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The delegates to the [Islamic foreign ministers] conference continued to arrive in the federal capital. Fresh arrivals are the delegates from the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, Mali and Upper Volta.

On his arrival, President of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus Rauf Kenktas was received at the airport by Minister for Information and Broadcasting retired Maj Gen Shahid Hamid. Talking to newsmen he expressed the hope that the conference would help to forge greater unity among the Islamic world in facing the dangers and threats posed to the Muslims.

Leader of the Mali delegation (Syed Mohammad Yusuf) also called for complete unity among the Muslims to overcome difficulties facing them.

Leader of the delegation of Upper Volta Malick Zorome [minister of justice and keeper of the seals] on his arrival said they were determined to make the conference a success. Secretary General of the Islamic States Broadcasting Services Organization Ahmad (Faraz), who will take part in the conference as an observer, also arrived in Islamabad this morning. He said his organization plans to produce more radio and television programs to promote unity among the Muslim countries. An Eritrean delegation headed by the chairman of the central council of the Eritrean Liberation Front also arrived this morning to attend the conference as observer.

Conference Agenda Set

BK151033 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The senior officials of the Muslim states have finalized their recommendations with regard to the agenda and organizational work of the 11th regular session of the Islamic foreign ministers conference opening in Islamabad on Saturday. This was stated at the joint news briefing by the chairman of the officials committee, Niaz A. Naik of Pakistan, and assistant secretary general for information of the Islamic Secretariat, (Pasian Zahedi), at the conclusion of the meeting of the senior officials in Islamabad this afternoon.

They said that the officials meeting was characterized by a spirit of strong solidarity and unity and all the recommendations have been made unanimously. These recommendations include the program for the inaugural session of the conference, which would be held in two parts. The first part at which President Gen Mohammad Ziaul Haq will deliver his address will be open and include speeches by three delegates representing the regions of Asia, Africa and the Arab countries. The second part of the inaugural session would be held in camera. The senior officials have also unanimously recommended to the foreign ministers conference certain organizational matters in order to enable the conference to expeditiously dispose of its work in view of the heavy agenda comprising about 90 items.

The newsmen were informed that the major items on the agenda of the conference would be the Afghanistan issue, the Middle East, Palestine, Jerusalem, repeated Israeli aggression against the Lebanon and the Iranian situation. As far as the Afghanistan issue is concerned, the foreign ministers conference would discuss it from all its aspects and hope to arrive at a consensus in this respect. The conference would also devise ways and means to strengthen the security of the Islamic ummah [community]--and force greater economic collaboration among the Muslim countries on the one hand and the world at large.

Spokesman on Iran, Afghanistan

BK151705 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 May 80

[Excerpts] The preparatory committee of the Islamic foreign ministers conference, consisting the senior officials, have finalized their recommendations with regard to the agenda and organizational work of the conference. (Pasian Zahedi), who is acting as the official spokesman of the foreign ministers conference, told newsmen that the important issues of the agenda include the Afghanistan issue which will be reviewed at the political committee meeting and at the plenary session. Asked whether the issue of U.S. military intervention in Iran or its economic blockade has been included in the agenda, the assistant secretary general [Pasian Zahedi] said that the Islamic Conference Organization has denounced and still denounces U.S. military intervention in Iran. In reply to a question whether any state or organization has appealed for representation of Afghanistan in the conference, he said that no such appeal has been made.

KABUL SCORES U.S., CARRINGTON NONALIGNMENT PROPOSAL

LD152302 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 May 80

[Station commentary]

[Text] With the victorious uprising of 27 December 1979, imperialist conspiracies, centered in the person of Hafizollah Amin, were foiled and the Sawr Revolution was once again put in its correct and principled direction. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA] has prepared and implemented beneficial programs for the realization of the necessary conditions for peaceful work and democratization of the people's life. Imperialism and reaction--which went into confusion after the fall of Amin--and the usurpers have disguised their plots and interference with new pretexts and tricks. Once they said that Amin was the legal president, but later they regarded the victory of the new development stage of the revolution as a danger to U.S. interests. Also, under the name of Islam, they have encouraged, trained and financed murder bands against our Muslim people.

Lord Carrington, whose country is well recognized by the people of Afghanistan through the three wars of liberation, has seditiously distorted the active policy of nonalignment of Afghanistan, which is based on the UN Charter, and has expressed the wish that revolutionary Afghanistan would remain, so to speak, neutral to the aggression against it. The warlike and antidetente circles have tried, by putting forward these accusations, [as heard] to slow down the process of worldwide detente and accelerate the arms race.

Carter, who puts forward empty comments and remarks here and there against Afghanistan in line with his policy of deceit and aggression, once again, in his speech in Philadelphia, criticized the friendly Soviet assistance to Afghanistan and claimed that the vital interests of America are linked with the Gulf region. The motive behind Carter's provocations is as clear as the sun. He wants, for the sake of covering the disgrace and disrepute of his government in the international arena, to find a basis for propaganda against revolutionary Afghanistan so that he can divert world attention from the failure of his government policy throughout the world. His aim, as seen by these remarks, is to justify the aggression of his agents. By talking of danger to U.S. interests, he wishes to increase his naval forces in the Gulf, the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean and threaten the littoral countries.

Whereas Carter and Lord Carrington have hypocritically cried about the neutralization of Afghanistan, the world knows that Afghanistan is one of the founders of the nonaligned movement and is loyal to all the principles and international criteria of this movement. If Carter believes in the nonaligned movement and the policy of relaxation of tension, then why does he reject the resolutions of the nonaligned countries regarding the just rights of the Palestinian people? If he believes in world peace, then why is he setting up new bases in Oman, Egypt, Diego Garcia and so forth? Carter's policy has even been appraised and criticized by U.S. conservative senators as a policy opposed to detente and the relaxation of international tension. Carter pays no attention to these critics and world public opinion. The only aim he has is his victory in the elections. His country is facing economic difficulties, inflation and increased unemployment. In order to hide these realities from the world he talks about other countries in his election speeches and continues deceiving the people of America so that once again he can be elected to the seat of power in the White House. The failed attempts of his government to topple the Islamic Republic of Iran and return Shah Mohammad Reza to power are among such failures, so that even his Western allies cannot defend the aggressive policy of his government.

We are fully convinced that Carter and the U.S. CIA, the warlike NATO circles and its agents in the region will no longer be able to stand in the way of the anti-imperialist and antireaction wrath of the people of Afghanistan, Iran and the countries of the region.

KABUL NOTES PRC-PAKISTANI TALKS ON MILITARY COOPERATION

LD151004 Kabul in English to Europe 1900 GMT 14 May 80

[Text] It appears that during the visit of Ziaul Haq, president of Pakistan, to China military issues have also been discussed by the two sides. According to reliable reports the Chinese leaders have [words indistinct] president of Pakistan the use of Chinese territory for the nuclear tests of that country. TASS reports from New Delhi that the military experts of both sides had agreed to send Pakistani Air Force personnel to China to learn the use of United States military equipment shipped to China recently. As a result of talks between the two sides it has been agreed to continue the training, with the assistance of Chinese advisers and instructors, of bandit groups in Pakistan who are to be sent to Afghanistan for subversive activities.

ARRESTED PAKISTANI RELEASED, TURNED OVER TO EMBASSY

LD151516 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] A spokesman has reported that in adhering to the policy of friendship with the people of Pakistan the Government of Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA] released this afternoon Mr Mulkhtar Hassan, a Pakistani journalist arrested in February-March 1980 for the crime of subversive activities against the DRA, and he was handed over to the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul.

Sixteen more Pakistani nationals arrested during the February-March incidents in Kabul on the basis of evidence and documents were previously released by the DRA Government, despite the fact that the security authorities had evidence and documents, as a gesture of good will to the people of Pakistan. These individuals are in addition to a number of Pakistani prisoners who were imprisoned in Pol-e Charki prison during the rule of Hafizollah Amin and who were released after the uprising of the 27 December.

REUTER REPORTS ON RELEASE OF AMERICAN, PAKISTANIS

WA151957 London REUTER in English 1853 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] New Delhi, May 15, REUTER--An American, Robert Lee, and 16 Pakistani nationals arrested in Kabul during last February's anti-Soviet demonstrations have been released, travellers arriving here from Afghanistan said today.

They said Mr Lee, denounced by Afghan and Soviet authorities as a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent, and the Pakistanis were released late last month.

Mr Lee appeared on Soviet television April 2 in an interview filmed in Afghanistan and condemned "U.S. imperialism."

Speaking in a slurred drawl, Mr Lee told his Soviet interviewer, "I think most importantly that the Moslem people of Afghanistan realize they are being tricked by U.S. imperialism."

SOVIET MINISTER SHCHERBINA CONCLUDES VISIT

LD152158 Kabul in Dari to Europe 1730 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The Soviet delegation led by Boris Shcherbina, the minister of construction of petroleum and gas industry enterprises, which came to Kabul at the invitation of the Ministry of Mines and Industries to participate in the inauguration ceremonies of the (Jarqodoq) gas refinery project, left for the USSR today. The Soviet minister left for his country after the opening ceremonies of the (Jarqodoq) project of Sheberghan.

At the Kabul international airport, the general director of the Afghan national oil institute and some other leading officials of the ministry of mines and industries saw off the members of the Soviet delegation.

PLANNED GAS EXPORTS TO SOVIET UNION REPORTED

LD152354 Kabul in English to Europe 1900 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] [Passage indistinct] it is expected that a total amount of 5.245 million cubic meters of gas will be exported to the Soviet Union annually. During the current year approximately 4 billion afghanis will be earned from the export of the gas to the Soviet Union. It should be pointed out that Afghanistan is rich in natural resources. Exploitation and expansion of these (?minerals) [words indistinct] economic development of that country. With the extensive cooperation and financial and technical (?assistance) of the Soviet Union [passage indistinct].

AFP CITES REBELS ON TAKEOVER OF HERAT CITY

BK151703 Hong Kong AFP in English 1648 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, 15 May (AFP)--Moslem Afghan rebels have taken over the city of Herat near the Iranian border "without much resistance," the Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan announced here today.

But reports reaching here said Soviet troops landed at Shindand airport near the city yesterday and heavy fighting raged between the rebels and Russian soldiers in the suburbs. Rebels sources said the insurgents had repelled the first attack and were "determined to fight the Russians out".

The Islamic alliance said the Afghan mujahedin had an easy time winning control of the city in western Afghanistan on Tuesday because the Afghan Army did not resist and the troops remained inside the barracks. Soviet troops had entered Herat Province two months ago but left the area following "great public resentment," leaving the city in the hands of local army units, Moslem rebels sources said.

Before the capture of Herat by Moslem guerrillas, the local population staged an anti-Soviet rally two days ago, calling for support in the "struggle to oust the Soviet forces," the alliance said. When Moslem guerrillas entered Herat, several Afghan soldiers defected and handed over their weapons, the rebel group said.

TASS Reports DRA Denial

LD160950 Moscow TASS in English 0940 GMT 16 May 80

[Text] Kabul, 16 May, TASS--It became known here that FRANCE PRESSE, quoting the "information" of the Tehran bureau of so-called Afghanistan's Party of Islam [Hezb-e Eslami] announced that "Afghan rebels seized Herat".

In this connection, a TASS correspondent was told in the Ministry of the Interior of the Democratic Republic Afghanistan that the assertion of FRANCE PRESSE is an absolutely groundless and ill-intentioned lie that is circulated by the circles hostile to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan so as to discredit the revolutionary system in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and to encourage piratic units that are sent into the country from Pakistan. A spokesman for the Ministry of the Interior said that life proceeds normally in Herat.

KABUL PROFESSOR CITED ON SITUATION IN UNIVERSITY

BK151725 Hong Kong AFP in English 1717 GMT 15 May 80

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Text] New Delhi, 15 May (AFP)--At least 4,000 Afghan students of Kabul University and city schools have been arrested by the Afghan authorities during the last fortnight following the April 27-29 student uprising against the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, a former professor (teacher) of the Kabul University said today.

The professor, who arrived here today from Kabul and asked not to be named, confirmed that at least 156 students including 68 girls were killed in the uprising, which was considered the most volatile since the February 21-22 mass scale anti-Soviet riots in the Afghan capital.

The professor said that most of the students killed were from Kabul University, which had now become the focal point of all anti-Soviet groups. Other travellers who arrived by the same flight could not confirm if violent incidents had occurred in Herat Province in western Afghanistan, against Soviet troops and said if it had happened so it was quite natural.

"Herat is the only province where the freedom fighters (rebels) are stronger and since December they are fighting a bitter war against the Russians, so if very many Russians were killed yesterday or today, there is nothing new," a traveller said.

The Kabul University professor, who is on his way to Western Europe, said that out of an 83-member teaching staff in Kabul University, only 20 were left. The rest have either gone to their villages or are "not just interested in cooperation with the murderous Russians".

The professor admitted that the Babrak Karmal regime had put pressure on the university teaching staff to cooperate with the regime. "But we are apolitical people...The pressure tactics of Karmal and his mentor the Soviets is unbearable... They want us to adopt the Marxist doctrine in the university curriculum and rather than toe their line we quit".

Meanwhile Western diplomatic sources here could not confirm if there were large scale resistance against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. A Western diplomat, who asked not to be named, said that he had not heard anything "very serious happening in Herat". The diplomat echoed the statement of the traveller and said "in Herat the Soviets are involved in a most difficult conflict with the rebels. It is possible that there have been some clashes, but nothing very seriously".

REBEL ALLIANCE SPOKESMAN COMMENTS ON AFGHAN PROPOSAL

TA160653 London BBC World Service in English at 0600 GMT 16 May 80

[From "Correspondents' Reports"]

[Text] The authorities in Afghanistan, in a broadcast clearly approved by their Soviet sponsors, had already hinted that a withdrawal of Soviet troops might take place if normal relations could be established with Iran and Pakistan, that is, by guarantees from the Russians and Americans. But Afghan rebel troops based in Pakistan have said they will have nothing to do with the latest proposals from Kabul. Ken Mason sent us this report from Islamabad which we will read for you.

Even supposing Afghan's idea is discussed at the forthcoming Islamic foreign ministers conference in Islamabad, as a practical proposal, it faces two major obstacles. One is the prompt and unsympathetic response it has drawn from the Pakistani Government, which says the problem in Afghanistan is an internal one that cannot be solved by guarantees from neighboring countries. The other is the unbending attitude of the rebel groups which regard the Karmal regime in Kabul as a Soviet puppet, (?something) that will not be dealt with except on the battlefield. A spokesman of the Jam'i-iat-e Islami or Islamic Association, one of the main groups in an alliance of five, told me: We don't regard the Karmal government as legal, so any proposal it makes is null and void. He said that if the Soviet troops were to withdraw, the Karmal regime would fall and he saw the latest proposal as an attempt to prop it up with Western as well as Soviet help.

Another element in the alliance known as the Gilani group took a similar line, even though this group has other differences with its partners. If the proposal means the withdrawal of Soviet forces and the abolition of the Karmal regime, a spokesman told me, we are in favor of it, but otherwise it is unacceptable. "No compromise" was also the reaction of the Hezb-e Islami, or Islamic Party. It claims to have the largest influence among the rebel movements and is independent of the alliance. We read you that report from Ken Mason in Islamabad.

FURTHER KABUL REPORTAGE ON 1980 SOCIOECONOMIC PLAN

LD151000 Kabul in English to Europe 1900 GMT 14 May 80

[Text] The socioeconomic development plan of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which was previously assessed and approved by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the Council of Ministers of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and was announced in the news, was finalized by the Presidium of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in its session of 12th May 1980. Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, vice president of the Revolutionary Council, deputy prime minister and minister of planning of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [word indistinct] submitted the report on the socioeconomic development of the plan of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for the year 1359 [1980] to the Council of Ministers. The main points of the said report are presented as follows:

Planning in Afghanistan has a rather long history of over 20 years. However, so far the objective conditions in our society for comprehensive and organized planning of the economy have not been entirely satisfactory. After the victory of the national, democratic, antifeudal and anti-imperialist revolution of Sawr, better conditions and possibilities appeared for the development of economic planning in the country.

In order to take advantage of these new conditions and possibilities and the formulation of the scientifically conceived 5-year plan, resolute efforts were made. But because of the ignorant interventions of Amin--on the one hand to some (?extent the) [word indistinct] tendencies included in the formulation of the plan and on the other hand the economic and social disorder characteristic of Amin's arbitrary rule--and likewise in consequence of subversive activities of reactionary elements attached to imperialism and a reduction in the volume of foreign aid, the implementation of the plan encountered some problems. Nevertheless, relative successes were achieved in the field of economic progress.

After the victory of the new phase of the Saur Revolution, a 1-year plan for 1359 was formulated, with consideration of previous defects and objective conditions of the country and on the basis of the main objectives of social and economic development of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and is now ready to be implemented.

Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, president of the Revolutionary Council and prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, in his important historic speech on the occasion of the second anniversary of the triumphant Saur Revolution, said the socioeconomic development plan of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan for the year 1359 has been formulated and completed with consideration of the basic guidelines of the current 5-year plan, the objectives set by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan for the new phase of the Saur Revolution and the conditions prevailing in the country. The plan anticipates subsequent growth of the economy on the basis of all-sided and efficient utilization of domestic financial resources, foreign aid, conforming to our national interests, as well as material and human resources of the country.

It is projected in the plan the volume of gross domestic product will increase by 9 billion afghanis; that is, 6.5 percent from 1359 over the anticipated figure for 1358. This increase will make it possible to achieve a corresponding increase in export revenue. The report [words indistinct] an increase in the volume of agricultural production during the current year to be achieved by granting aid to farmers, the establishment of agricultural (?funds), the development of agricultural cooperatives and mechanization of agriculture.

The report goes on as follows: The general volume of industrial production will be considerably increased during 1359, amounting to 35 billion afghanis, that is, an increase of 11.6 percent.

After giving a number of examples about the increases in the volume of various industrial products the report anticipates the following about the mineral resources: an increase in the capacity of existing useful mines and exploration of new ones; the output of natural gas will be increased to 10 billion cubic metres and [words indistinct]. In the present evolutionary phase of our society transport is of special importance. The plan anticipates an increase in the volume of (?goods products for) transportation. The relative increase in government share in transportation, expansion of road network and measures for the increase of the volume of transportation [words indistinct].

The general volume of development budget for the year 1359 has been determined as 14.5 billion afghanis, with 6 billion afghanis from the domestic budget and 8.5 billion afghanis from foreign aid. Seventy-two percent of the foreign aid constitutes the assistance from the socialist countries, of which 65 percent is from the Soviet Union.

The report adds that considerable increase in the growing of [words indistinct] of the seven institutions and cooperatives has been foreseen in the 1359 plan. The volume of retail goods in 1359 will be increased by 12 billion afghanis, which is an increase of (?13) percent compared with 1357. The volume of foreign trade will be increased by 34 percent and the trade will have a better situation in general.

In order to realize the programs of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan concerning (?social) changes in the country, the future development of education, public health, art and culture that has been anticipated in the plan [word indistinct] from the domestic sources over 1 billion afghanis from the 1359 development budget should be spent in the social services projects. For the first time some 500 million afghanis have been allocated to improve the living conditions of the people in the least developed areas of the country.

After recommending a series of measures to the various ministries about its success and realization, it has been added in the report that although so far planning in our country will not cover all aspects of socioeconomic life, it will be expanded from year to year. We have to realize that it is only through scientific planning that we can find solutions to the complicated problems of the country and embark on the construction of a new society. It is on the basis of this realization and belief that the plan for the year 1359 was formulated and is now presented for approval as a plan of transition from a period of social and economic hardship to an era of fruitful and peaceful growth in the country and as a relatively realistic plan commensurate with specific and particular conditions and possibilities existing in the country at the present time.

PRESIDENT ZIA PROPOSES SUMMIT OF SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

BK151301 Dacca Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Bangladesh has proposed a summit meeting of the six countries of the South Asian region to forge a greater unity and cooperation. Special emissaries carrying President Zia's message on the subject have been visiting the countries of the region. Foreign Minister Prof Shamsul Haq told newsmen in Dacca today that the Bangladesh president has written letters to the heads of state of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan, explaining the proposal and seeking their reaction to the possibility of a summit. He said response so far has been encouraging. Our diplomatic representative understands that the proposed meeting will mainly discuss the possibility of further strengthening cooperation in the economic field, including the prospect of establishing an ASEAN-type economic community.

FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON UPCOMING ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

BK151354 Dacca Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The 11th Islamic foreign ministers conference beginning in Islamabad on Saturday is to take up eight specific Bangladesh proposals in the political and economic fields. This was stated in Dacca today by Foreign Minister Prof Mohammad Shamsul Haq, who is leaving for Islamabad tomorrow to lead a 10-member Bangladesh delegation to the conference.

One of the two important proposals on the political side relates to the setting up of a 12-member standing committee of Islamic foreign ministers to deal with problems and crises arising from time to time. The committee represents a common Islamic position of matters of special significance to Islamic countries and work for strengthening the unity and solidarity and promoting cooperation in the economic, cultural and other fields. The other proposal is on the immediate appointment of a contact group to help resolve the deepening dispute between Iran and United States over the hostage crisis. The group is to contact and consult the concerned and other countries to pave the way for the restoration of peace and stability in the region.

The foreign minister said the conference will mainly concentrate on such political issues as the Middle East problems, Afghanistan, the crisis between Iran and the United States, on the one hand, and Iraq, on the other. All of them pose a grave danger of superpower confrontation in the region, he said.

In the economic field the focus is likely to be on such major issues as the effect of the rising price of oil on the oil importing Islamic countries; a general agreement on economic, technical and commercial cooperation; the possibility of an Islamic common market and cooperation for food security in Islamic countries. There are six Bangladesh proposals in the economic field. One of them relates to taking up joint ventures to accelerate the pace of the economic development with a view to attaining (?self-sufficiency) in the basic necessities of life and strategic material.

Other proposals are diversification of investment by the Islamic countries with priority to development of agriculture, creation of a special fund for countries critically affected by the energy crisis, establishment of an Islamic international banking system to coordinate and expand credit facilities, expansion of training facilities for technical and professional personnel and development of equal opportunities of education with special emphasis on Islamic values.

The foreign minister also replied to questions on bilateral matters. He said during his stay in Islamabad he will have talks on bilateral issues with Pakistani leaders. The question of nonlocals in Bangladesh and sharing of assets and liabilities may also be covered. He said Pakistan had already agreed to negotiate further [word indistinct] nonlocals in Bangladesh who had opted for Pakistan. This question as well as that of the assets and liabilities are expected to be discussed between the foreign secretaries of the two countries. He said he will, however, impress upon the Pakistani leaders the urgency and humanitarian aspects of the question of nonlocals and call for a speedy solution.

ZIA REITERATES SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

BK160542 Dacca Overseas Service in English 0445 GMT 16 May 80

[Excerpt] President Ziaur Rahman has reiterated total solidarity with the Palestinian people in their just struggle for restoration of their national rights, including the establishment of an independent state in their homeland.

In a message to the weeklong Palestinian week which began in Dacca yesterday, the president said Bangladesh always stood by its Palestinian brethren and extended full support to the UN resolution calling for restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

He said peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East as long as Israel continues to defy the international community and does not vacate the occupied Arab lands acquired through aggression. President Zia said Bangladesh condemns continued Israeli occupation of Arab lands including the holy city of Jerusalem and the gross violation of human rights in the occupied territories.

FINANCE MINISTER DISCUSSES CONSORTIUM AID COMMITMENT

BK151632 Hong Kong AFP in English 1613 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Dacca, 15 May (AFP)--Bangladesh Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said here today that the aid to Bangladesh consortium had committed 1.3 billion U.S. dollars assistance to his country to finance development projects and meet import costs during the next fiscal year (1980-81).

Talking to newsmen on return from Paris where he led a ten-member Bangladesh team to the aid club meeting, Mr Rahman said the amount fell short of the expectation of Bangladesh. "We sought 2.5 billion U.S. dollars but failed to negotiate in full," he told a questioner. Mr Rahman said that although he was not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, there was no disappointment either. He observed that "the donors are not as generous as before."

He said the amount might rise at 1.5 billion dollars when budgetary allocations of some donor countries were finalized. Of the total commitment of 1.3 billion dollars, 700 million dollars would come in the form of project assistance, 350 million dollars as commodity assistance and the rest as food aid.

The finance minister said the donors had appreciated the improvement of project preparations and implementation and that they were quite satisfied with the progress Bangladesh made last year despite crop failure leading to huge foodgrains imports. He said the donors were likely to raise contributions when they would be fully apprised of Bangladesh's 17.2 billion dollars second five-year plan which begins July next.

SOURCES REVEAL SOVIET CONDITIONS FOR AFGHAN PULLOUT

BK151627 Hong Kong AFP in English 1548 GMT 15 May 80

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, 15 May, (AFP)--The Soviet Union today informed India that it would withdraw its troops from Afghanistan provided the Islamic conference scheduled to begin in Islamabad Saturday does not persist with its earlier resolution of "no direct dealing" with the leadership in Kabul, highly placed diplomatic sources said today.

The sources, who asked not to be identified, said that the Soviet Union also wanted a "meaningful assurance" from the United States that Washington would not do anything that would endanger the Babrak Karmal government and a guarantee that they would "not meddle in the internal affairs of Afghanistan".

The Russians resorted to normal diplomatic channels to inform India about their latest stand, which is considered as the most credible peace feeler so far by the Soviet Union since December last year when it moved its troops following the ouster and assassination of Hafizullah Amin from power.

However, Western diplomatic sources here feel that the new Soviet move was aimed at creating confusion at the Islamic conference, which otherwise, would have come out with strongest condemnation of the Soviet action in Afghanistan.

An Indian Foreign Office source reacted to the latest Soviet stand by saying that it was a "diplomatic victory" for India as New Delhi had always been holding that there would only be a diplomatic solution of the Afghanistan crisis and not a military one. "Now it seems that the Soviets are becoming more realistic and are contemplating a political or diplomatic solution rather than relying on brute military force," the source said.

Indian Foreign Office sources said that the Soviet feeler was also aimed at influencing the meeting that Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey A. Gromyko is scheduled to have with the newly appointed United States Secretary of State Mr Edmund S. Muskie at Vienna Friday.

The sources who preferred to remain unidentified said that it could be a Soviet diplomatic effort to "find a safety valve" to prevent a severe condemnation at the Islamic conference.

Mr Muskie, who is on his way to Vienna, reacted to the Soviet proposal during a stopover at Brussels, saying that a total pullout of an estimated 100,000 to 110,000 Soviet troops from Afghanistan would be the first step towards a meaningful normalisation effort with Washington.

But Indian Foreign Office sources said that Mr Muskie was asking for too much at a time. "...At least the Soviets are now talking about a possible pullout and we feel that no strict preconditions should be set... Once the Russians start getting out, much of the imaginary tension would go", an Indian Foreign Office source said.

RAO, SECRETARY GONSALVES SLATED TO VISIT USSR, PRC

BK151557 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs Eric Gonsalves is to visit China in the near future. This was stated by a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi today. He, however, said that no date has been fixed for the visit. The All-India Radio correspondent understands that External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao is visiting the Soviet Union. His visit is likely to take place by the end of this month.

GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN COMMENTS ON AFGHAN CALL FOR TALKS

BKL51645 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today said that the restoration of peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan does not depend on agreements with the neighboring countries but on the mutual reconciliation and integrity of the Afghan people. Commenting on the Karmal administration's statement, broadcast over Radio Kabul yesterday, the spokesman said that Pakistan's considered views on this can be expressed only after reviewing the authentic text of the statement. However, the spokesman said that as a preliminary comment on the statement he regrets to note that Afghanistan, instead of giving attention to the main issues which led to the present crisis there, is still engaged in propaganda.

The spokesman said that real cause of the Afghanistan crisis is the large-scale intervention on the part of a bigpower, which was launched to suppress a situation created by an internal conflict in that country. This has led to popular resistance in the entire country and in the Afghan capital. Besides this, recently a large number of students, including women, demonstrated there. Under this situation, the neighboring countries, who had nothing to do with the internal developments in Afghanistan, nor had any part in [words indistinct] could not be expected to furnish any guarantee to end the struggle of the Afghan people, which is their internal affair. The spokesman said that Pakistan has reiterated its policy of noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries and it has unilaterally proposed an international inspection of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the stationing of a peace force along Pakistan-Afghan border to check any external intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The spokesman said that Pakistan is ready to participate in any international effort aimed at facilitating the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, ending the bloody fighting there and creating an atmosphere conducive to the return of Afghan refugees to their homes with peace and security.

The spokesman recalled that it has been Pakistan's consistent policy to hold talks with Afghanistan to normalize relations and to solve all disputed issues between the two countries on the basis of peaceful coexistence. The spokesman said that Pakistan has adhered to this policy despite the changes in April 1978 and September 1979 in Afghanistan. The spokesman added that Pakistan is ready to resume talks with any government in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from there. Pakistan and Afghanistan are neighboring countries, attached to each other by long-standing religious and cultural ties, he said, adding that even now it is Pakistan's basic aim to establish friendly relations with Afghanistan based on mutual interests. The spokesman said that this objective can be achieved only when foreign high-handedness and hegemony over Afghanistan is ended and the people there can determine their own future independently. The spokesman said that Pakistan firmly believes that the Islamic foreign ministers conference will be able to formulate a code of conduct leading to a rapid political solution of the Afghanistan issue. Referring to the present administration of Afghanistan, the spokesman said that Pakistan is bound by the decisions of the Islamic Conference which directed the members countries not to have any relations with the Afghan administration until the Soviet troops were withdrawn from Afghanistan.

TEHRAN NOTES PROPOSAL TO SUSPEND U.S. REPORTING ON HOSTAGES

JN151959 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] In the past 2 weeks, a number of commentators as well as the families of the U.S. hostages in Tehran have suggested that the press and television networks should ignore the issue of these hostages for a while.

This came in a report sent to us from Washington by the representative of the Iranian Foreign Ministry. The report said that the purpose of this suggestion was to suspend the information media's propaganda on the hostage issue because it has a negative effect on the solution of this issue.

KHOMEYNI URGES ISLAMIFICATION OF NATIONAL RADIO, TELEVISION

LD151352 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Imam Khomeyni, the leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this morning received Mr Taqi Farahi, the new managing director of the organization of the Voice and Profile of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He made the following remarks about the Islamification of programs of this organization and the purging of deviationist elements and those associated with the former regime: [read by announcer]

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. From the moment the radio and television came under the control of the Islamic Republic I was concerned about it, for this is an organization which if it is good will make our country good and if it is corrupt it may bring about a great deal of corruption. For this reason, I must draw your attention to certain matters. One of them is that if this radio and television organization, which penetrates everywhere, even in village homes, is not Islamicized 100 percent, it will mean that Islam has not been implemented in Iran. If radio and television are allowed to be in the service of a band or a group of deviationists and warped elements, this may drag the whole country into corruption.

For this reason, you are dutybound--it is both your religious and legal duty--to purge the radio and television organization of groups which are deviationist, which had ties with the former regime or were in its service. Those who are corrupt and who cause corruption must also be purged. You must, with the utmost firmness and without any consideration whatsoever, purge these from radio and television. Most important of all, great care should be taken about the rest of the news [as heard] so that deviationist individuals do not infiltrate it.

Let us be clear that when we refer to the Islamic Republic it is not a mere word; it must be realized. Wherever we go now we see corruption, or else Islam has not been implemented properly. But since this is more important than all the rest, my insistence on radio and television is greater than other things, for corruption in this will cause corruption in society and the nation, for what is said here is broadcast throughout the country and it will bring about corruption across the country as well as abroad.

For this reason, this organization must be 100 percent in this regard so as to be in keeping with the Islamic movement and revolution. It should not be the sort of organization that is called Islamic on the face of it, in which we can observe certain utterances which inflict harm on Islam and the Islamic Revolution.

One must be absolutely careful that we should not in any way whatsoever imitate East or West because imitating the East or West is not in harmony with Islamic radio and television. You take absolute care and have no fear whatsoever of the speeches or writings of those Western-intoxicated intellectuals. These intellectuals are thinking in terms of turning this country into a luxury one, as it were, disregarding any ruins there may be. They want to bring about a Western country, while the people here have all endeavored to see that Islam is implemented in Iran--not merely an Islamic rule. When we go to any of its offices we fail to see Islam present.

The Western-intoxicated intellectuals must be fought against with the utmost intensity. For this reason, you are assigned, with the cooperation of Muslim and committed and non-deviationist staff, to purge this organization, without any fear of anyone or any group. You must take care that not even a single committed Muslim in this organization leaves it unless he commits an offense, which is something different, and in that event there is no difference between him and the others. It should not be said that these people are a bit reactionary, as the shah used to state about the militant and committed Muslims at the time.

Militant and committed Muslims must remain there and those who are purged should be replaced by militant, committed, nondeviationist individuals. Praise be to God, we have good writers and speakers; we have everything. In my view most of the films made by Iranians themselves are better than those made by others. For example, the movie "Gaav" was instructive. But [Western-oriented people want] the unfettered import of films from Europe or America to make the Western-intoxicated intellectuals happy. The films coming to Iran from abroad are largely colonialist. Thus, you should cut out foreign, colonialist films unless they are 100-percent correct. At any rate, this is your responsibility and that of others in charge there.

I once again draw your attention to the need to purge the associates of the former regime from there. Of course, an interview is not proscribed, even if a communist wants to come and say his piece and receives an answer from another person. There is nothing wrong in this. In short, radio and television should not be in the hands of a group of seditionists. Most regrettably there are still roots of the former regime remaining. Their interests have been undermined to some extent now. So they engage in subversion and they are trying to revert back to their old lust-mongering past and turn the radio and television into their own shop.

I state categorically: We want neither the East nor the West to say good things about us. We do not want Western-intoxicated intellectuals and mercenary authors to praise us. We want to do what Islam commands and perform service to our country. We do not want an organization set up that would drag our children into prostitution and make individuals indifferent to such an extent that if they lost everything they would not be in the least concerned. We want to bring about a change in offices, in the same way that, praise be to God, all the people have changed now. One must pay attention to these things. We pray that, God willing, you will be successful. We have often said that radio and television must be fully independent; its independence must be preserved, and no one should interfere with it.

You should strive only in making it as Islamic as possible so that it will be in line with the people's wishes. The people have given their blood. We cannot have Muslims giving their blood and then have deviationist individuals coming in and reap the reward. This is something that is neither in keeping with commonsense nor any religion.

The Muslim people have poured into the streets, have cried "God is great," have sacrificed their lives and have said: We want an Islamic Republic. The content of an Islamic Republic must be Islamic in every way. One of the important things concerns this very radio and television, which is more important than everything else. These two organizations must be Islamicized; preserve its independence. If anyone comes and tries to impose something on you, do not pay any attention to him at all, and set up this organization with independence and strength. Be successful.

PRESIDENT BANI-SADR DECLINES KHALKHALI'S RESIGNATION

LD151103 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The president's cultural and press adviser announced through the central news bureau: The resignation of Hojjat ol-Eslam Khalkhali was not accepted by the president, and he will continue in his work.

The president's cultural and press adviser also announced the views of the seven-man team entrusted with investigating the complaints concerning the first round of elections for the national consultative assembly in some cities. The seven-man team has confirmed by majority votes the elections in Karaj, Varamin, (Shahriyar) and Damavand but have declared the election in Rud Sar null and void.

JOINT COUNCIL SESSION DISCUSSES 1980 BUDGET

LD152006 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1930 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] A joint meeting was held tonight by members of the Revolution Council and Council of Ministers. The meeting, chaired by President Bani-Sadr, discussed the 1359 1980-81 budget bill. According to a PARS NEWS AGENCY correspondent, after the meeting Dr Hasan Habibi said: There is a great possibility that the budget will be approved this coming Saturday.

BANI-SADR GRANTS INTERVIEW TO L'ESPRESSO

LD151641 Rome L'ESPRESSO in Italian 11 May 80 pp 18-22

[Giancesare Flesca dispatch: "Now They Are Awaiting the Coup"]

[Excerpts] Tehran--In the presidential palace the atmosphere is one of besieged revolution. There are sandbags. Gunmen are lining the roofs, and you are searched two or even three times before entering. In the past few hours about half-a-dozen bombs have exploded in Tehran alone. Bani-Sadr received me in his office--the same office in which I met with Bazargan in his day and, before him, the short-lived Bakhtiar. The president was tired; his faith and optimism have been dealt severe blows recently. Just before our meeting he had had a meeting with senior army officers and was due to meet with leaders of Peykan, the state automobile factory which is about to close down. In the past 2 months the cost of producing one vehicle has risen 200 percent and the legal authorities have opened an investigation on the manager.

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"You can see," Bani-Sadr said, "that this country is having difficulty surviving even without the economic sanctions. Unless we emerge from this chaos within a few months it will be worse than Chile, much worse. Fundamentally Carter's military exercises are not our main problem...."

Bani-Sadr is also supreme commander of the armed forces because Khomeyni, in a fit of generosity, delegated the task to him. Officially, therefore, his reply was bound to be reassuring: "Everything is calm and under control. The armed forces are loyal to the republic." His aides, however admit that rightwing and leftwing opposition groups are active within the army; but the orthodox religious element is not present. The growing tension in Kordestan must be blamed on the right, which is strongest in the air force. A journalist close to the president asserts that he saw in Baneh--a Kurdish town--bodies of rebels and regular soldiers mutilated by the same weapons and the same type of wound: as if to say that a mysterious third force has intervened in the furious fighting in this region with the aim of provoking people. The left is just as active and is particularly strong among the soldiers and junior officers and is pressing for the "Nasirization" of the regime, toward a rapprochement with the USSR.

Before meeting with Bani-Sadr I met with General Rahimi, former chief of Khomeyni's special guards who was retired a few months ago because of his overexuberance. This was confirmed by his announcement that he now leads a paramilitary body of "black shirts"--1,000 men ready for anything and capable of anything, even of "releasing the hostages within 2 hours if only Khomeyni were to give the order to do so." In the gaps between his narcissistic outbursts, Rahimi told of the Malaise among the 8,000 officers retired after the revolution, the indiscipline which reigns in the regiments, the clergy's interference in army life and the contacts which the 50 top generals who fled Tehran with the shah have succeeded in establishing in the country. He painted the picture of an army afflicted by a serious identity crisis and a crisis of social representation, pointing out that no senior officer is a member of the Revolution Council member.

I asked Bani-Sadr therefore for permission to discuss this question with Defense Chief of Staff General Shadmehr, of the possible "strong men" of the future who has hitherto never agreed to give interviews. After feverish negotiations Shadmehr received me with impeccable formality in the general staff headquarters. In the waiting room there was a large map, and facing it, a valuable edition of the Koran open on the book rest. Like Iran's radar, the map dated from the days when Persia was part of the integrated CENTO defense system and showed only the country's northwestern borders--the borders with Iraq and the Soviet Union. In the shah's days there was no threat from Hormuz and Pakistan.

Even now, according to the general, the real enemy lies to the east and is represented by the Soviet divisions installed in Afghanistan and in southern Russia. It is the Russians who are stirring up the Iraqis in the hope of obtaining some advantage from them. The Americans are taking advantage of that and are also active in that area. The Kremlin is aiming exclusively at the territorial division of Iran, while the Pentagon regards this as subordinated to its main objective which is to overthrow the present regime. Against the two superpowers, Ahdmehr said, "our 10 divisions and 300,000 soldiers can do very little."

On the other hand they would stand a good chance against the 120,000 men of the Iraqi Army, partly because our military system is working again, we are manufacturing spare parts ourselves, we are reviewing last year's purges case by case and discipline has returned to the barracks."

Portraits of Khomeyni are to be seen everywhere. There are no pictures of Bani-Sadr even though he is head of state and of the armed forces. So whom do the armed forces obey? At the [military] academy of answers are vague. The answer given by General Shadmehr a few hours before had been more significant: "We accept Bani-Sadr as chief. However, we think it appropriate to inform Imam Khomeyni in person of every decision." On the way back from the academy you cross downtown Tehran which today, 1 May, is filled with small processions from all factions. The bulk of the population, the huge crowds seen on previous occasions, had stayed at home from weariness or fear of bombs. The guard outside the presidential palace had been increased. These small colonial palaces now look more than ever like the mock baroque of Santiago's Casa de la Moneda. The comparison between Allende and Bani-Sadr seems probable: In fact more so in misfortune than good fortune.

QOTBZADEH BRIEFS KHOMEYNI ON INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

JN151941 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Islamic Revolution, received this morning Foreign Minister Sadeq Qotbzadeh who submitted a report to his eminence on the convocation of the international conference which will look into U.S. interventions and aggressions against Iran. During the meeting Mr Qotbzadeh learned the imam's viewpoints on the Islamic conference in Pakistan.

The foreign minister will leave for Islamabad to participate in the Islamic ministerial conference which will be held there on Saturday.

AMBASSADOR MOKRI DISCUSSES ARMS AID FROM USSR

LD151345 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 12 May 80 p 3

[KEYHAN correspondent 'Ali Behzad interview with Iranian ambassador to the Soviet Union Mokri: "We Shall Not Request Military Assistance From Any Country on Any Pretext"; date and place not specified]

[Text] In an exclusive interview with KEYHAN following his audience with the great revolutionary leader Imam Khomeyni and his report on various local and foreign issues, Islamic Republic of Iran ambassador to the Soviet Union Dr Mokri replied to questions put by our correspondent 'Ali Behzad.

In reply to the question: "Foreign Minister Qotbzadeh has said in an interview that we shall probably buy arms from the Soviet Union. What is your view of this, and has it been discussed with the imam?", Dr Mokri said:

If this is so, since the matter has been raised by Mr Qotbzadeh, I cannot express an opinion. And he himself must comment in his capacity as foreign minister. What I can say, however, is that the matter of arms purchase or any other transaction should not be regarded as military assistance. We shall not request military assistance from any country on any pretext. In the event of an attack by America, we shall not allow a single foreign soldier to enter our homeland.

To Go to Moscow or Not

As to whether or not the question of Iranian athletes' going to Moscow had been raised with the imam, Dr Mokri said:

In my report I brought all the details to his attention. The imam made some corrections and issued some instructions, and the authorities in charge will be clarifying the matter.

In reply to the question: "To what extent does the Soviet Government keep the Iranian Embassy there informed of new American plots against Iran," Dr Mokri said:

Information from the Russian news agencies is only concerned with news and is not official, and it must be noted that the government of that country only gives us news which is official. Nevertheless it must be noted that, even before the unsuccessful American attack on Iran, they not only considered the action possible but also declared that it was probable.

I must add something else: Certain persons have spread the rumor that the American planes were attacked by Russian planes. This is a groundless rumor and casts doubt on the divine support for our dear Islamic Revolution of Iran.

We Shall Not Allow Ourselves To Be Exploited

In reply to the question: "It is said that the Soviet Union is supplying some of the oil industry's spare parts requirements. How far is this true?" Dr Mokri said:

As ambassador, my mission is to create an atmosphere conducive to political discussion between the two countries. This question is the concern of the relevant ministries, and it is for them to offer an explanation in this regard.

Dr Mokri was asked: "How do you see our future political, economic and cultural relations with the Soviet Union?"

In reply, he said:

An ambassador's duty is to prevent relations being disturbed and, even if relations between his own country and the country to which he is accredited hang by a hair's breadth. He must still try to maintain those relations. However, if he feels that these relations go against the interests of his country, he must act immediately. Insofar as we do not want anyone to interfere in our internal affairs and subject us to economic oppression, if we feel that deception and duplicity exists in the relationship, then we certainly put a stop to it.

As things stand we have reached an understanding with the Soviet Union on certain issues but not on others. For example, we are not selling gas to the Soviet Union at present, and we believe that past contracts with that country subjected us to blackmail and needed to be abrogated.

In my view we should pursue a policy whereby we do not sell or buy from one single country; thus, we shall both expand our economy and escape economic dependency.

Solution to Iran-America Crisis

Dr Mokri explained the solution to the Iran-America crisis in the following terms:

We must wait until the parliament convenes, since parliament and the president of the republic are capable of solving the issue.

Our correspondent asked Dr Mokri: "Are you carrying a message to the Soviet leaders from Imam Khomeyni or the president of the republic?"

In reply, Dr Mokri said:

No, since there is nothing to be said, and even if something should crop up and the imam or the president or a state body have a message to send, the Soviet leaders will obviously be informed by telegram and in a manner whereby everyone will know about it.

In conclusion, Dr Mokri was asked to give details of his talks with the imam. He said:

During detailed discussions, I sketched Iran's policy in relation to the Soviet Union, the positions adopted by the Eastern bloc and the Islamic countries, and the presence of the superpowers' forces in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, as well as another matter which I regret I cannot mention.

UNREST, VIOLENCE CONTINUE IN PROVINCES

Qazvin Army Statement

LD151140 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 80

[Text] The 16th Army Division in Qazvin issued the following statement today:

In His exalted name. We express our thanks to the valiant and realistic people of Divandarreh who by themselves expelled the counterrevolutionaries and the armed, illegitimate [as heard] and deceived individuals from their society and their city and we express our brotherhood with and affection for those who had been deceived and who have now become aware of the truth and the goals of the Islamic Republic and have joined the peace-loving people of Divandarreh. At the same time we inform you, the inhabitants of Divandarreh and the adjacent villages, that as the army units should leave Divandarreh and carry out their mission--which is confronting the enemies and defending the borders and the territorial integrity of the country--we ask you in a brotherly fashion to prevent the repeated infiltration of a few people who are still intent on creating disturbances and disorder in the region. You should not allow them to return after the withdrawal of the army and the Guards Corps from the region so as to create new disturbances and endanger the security of the region. The damage caused by repeated confrontations between the army and those elements would be inflicted upon you. [sentence indistinct]

BBC Report on Kordestan

TA151554 London BBC World Service in English 1500 GMT 15 May 80

[From "Radi Newsreel"]

[Text] The government in Iran is not commenting on the Afghan proposals until after the Islamic foreign ministers' meeting in Islamabad on Saturday. Meanwhile it's been grappling with the problem of the rebellion in the Province of Kordestan where heavy fighting has been going on since last month. One of the measures it has announced in a bid to end the rebellion is the acceptance, with some amendments, of the six-point plan for autonomy put forward several months ago by the Kurdish Democratic Party.

However, as Alex Brodie reports from Tehran, it is still not clear whether the end of the war has been brought any closer.

[Begin Brodie recording] What are we waiting for now is the response of the Kurds. They are meeting. They are discussing, but it looks as if they have little to go on. First reaction from a number of officers of Kurdish groups in Mahabad was the same. We are not optimistic. So why not. Well, firstly the president had accepted the 6 points before, at the end of the last war, and autonomy never came. Dr Bani-Sadr demanded that the Kurds lay down their arms first. In his latest statement he said: Put aside your arms. That sounds like a general exhortation, not a demand to disarm, but it is not clear.

One thing is certain, if the president is still demanding disarmament, the initiative is dead. Then there are the amendments. What they are has not been announced, and it is even possible the Kurds don't know yet. Also the president did not mention a ceasefire, and that is the Kurds' first demand. Two weeks ago a ceasefire was in the air. The government said the Kurds broke it. The Kurdish groups say there wasn't one, the government didn't sign. It caused more distrust.

President Bani-Sadr, in making his latest statement, seemed to assume the war was over. He, the army and the Revolutionary Guards have claimed victory in Sanandaj. The Kurds say that is not true, there is still fighting, their guerrillas have not been beaten, and in any case Sanandaj is only one town. There is still war throughout the rest of the province. The government's peace plan is only the first step. The path to peace and a solution of the ancient Kurdish problem is a long and complicated one. [end recording]

Sanandaj Prayers Resume

LD151722 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1530 GMT 15 May 80

[Excerpts] The central news bureau reports that the third joint announcement by the public relations office of the 28th Army Division of Kordestan and the Revolution Guards Corps stationed in Sanandaj was issued tonight as follows:

After a long period of repression the Friday prayers will be held tomorrow, God willing, at Banadaj Jam'e Mosque. The prayers will be preceded by a speech by the esteemed professor, Dr Navvab. We therefore call on all Sanandaj citizens to attend this glorious ceremony.

Urumiyeh Explosion

LD151840 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 May 80

[Excerpt] According to our correspondent in Urumiyeh, following the explosion of an antitank mine this afternoon at Dow Ab pass one Javarmard was martyred and four more wounded. They were passengers in a gendarmerie vehicle traveling from Naqadeh which ran over the mine.

NVOI COMMENTARIES DISCUSS DOMESTIC, INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

TA152012 [Editorial Report] The Clandestine National Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran at 1730 GMT on 15 May carried two commentaries:

The first commentary, entitled "The United States' fifth column should be liquidated," says "reports received from Washington indicate that a fresh aggressive plot against Iran is being prepared." The scale of this aggression is so wide that various types of heavy weapons are being readied in the United States for dispatch to military bases in different parts of the near and Middle East, in the vicinity of Iran. At the same time new details of the abortive conspiracy of the United States are being revealed.

For example, the U.S. ABC Television Network has revealed the elaborate plan of the recent U.S. aggression against our country, which clearly shows that in all its acts against the Iranian Revolution Washington had delegated an important role to its fifth column, made up of former SAVAK employees and counterrevolutionary elements and also mercenary American spies. The Kuwaiti magazine AL-MAJALA AL-MUSAWWAR has written that the abandoned U.S. helicopters in the desert were bombed because the secret documents left in these helicopters contained a list of CIA agents and remnants of the former regime who are among officials of the revolution's leadership. The genuine and sincere followers of the imam's path should analyze all these events very carefully. The fifth column of the United States must be crushed to the last person.

The second commentary, entitled "A Commentary Regarding Some of the Results of the Extraordinary OPEC Conference," says the extraordinary OPEC conference, which was held recently in Saudi Arabia, faced two sets of problems. First are the problems that U.S. imperialism has created and continues to create to prevent OPEC from achieving successful results. The other problems are those that have been created and continue to be created by some of the puppet members of this organization, on orders from the oil monopolies.

By its aggressive and pirate actions against our homeland and through the concentration of its armed forces in the Arabian sea and the Persian Gulf region, U.S. imperialism is clearly threatening the security of the other countries of the region. On the other hand, puppet countries, headed by Saudi Arabia, prevent OPEC from achieving progress and making decisive decisions.

Despite the obstructions by Saudi Arabia and the other countries dependent on it, certain positive decisions were made at the extraordinary OPEC conference. Among these was the adoption of a resolution to refrain from increasing the level of oil production. However, at this conference Saudi Arabia's oil minister, Sheyk Yamani, objected to the preparation of any kind of oil production program for the OPEC member countries. Also as a result of the obstructions of Sheyk Yamani, the representative of the oil monopolies, no decision was made about an increase in oil prices.

The same time it must be said that our country's oil minister was the spokesman of the true wishes of the Iranian people and all the nations of the oil-producing countries at this conference.

CENTRAL BANK RECALLS 10,000-RIAL BANKNOTES

Bank Communique

WAI21530 Tehran BAMDAD in Persian 6 May 80 p 10

[Text] Beginning today, all bank offices throughout the country will start exchanging the 10,000-rial banknotes.

The Central Bank in a communique announced the following: All sisters and brothers can begin today, Tuesday 6 May 1980, coming to any bank and exchanging their 10,000-rial banknotes in one of the two following manners:

--Depositing them in a checking or savings account; or,

--Exchanging them for other banknotes.

The equivalent of these 10,000-rial banknotes can be received in the new design or in any other kind of banknotes.

This communique of the Central Bank of Iran also stated: Since the Central Bank also intends to accord more advantages to savings accounts than under past conditions, it is requested that all compatriots who do not need the cash to put their money into savings accounts in the banks and, thereby, help the country's economy. Savers will benefit more from the new advantages accorded.

The Central Bank also requests all brothers and sisters to refrain from mobbing the banks and to cooperate in handling this matter.

At the end of the communique, it was stated that with the implementation of this decision, after 21 May 1980 the 10,000-rial banknotes bearing the shah's picture would not have the slightest value, and the banks would not accept them.

Warning by Prosecutor

WAI31400 Tehran BAMDAD in Persian 6 May 80 p 1

[Text] In connection with exporting 10,000-rial banknotes and the struggle against fugitive counter-revolutionaries returning such banknotes from abroad, Ayatollah 'Ali Qoddusi, general revolutionary prosecutor of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has issued an announcement warning all customs officials at border points and airports to investigate all persons in this respect and to arrest and turn over to the Central Islamic Revolutionary Court all those found carrying such banknotes.

After this announcement, the chief of the Central Bank stated that fugitive counter-revolutionaries bringing back 10,000-rial banknotes to exchange them would be a big blow to the national economy. And he also alerted all customs officials to investigate and arrest all persons bringing back these banknotes and to turn them over to the Central Islamic Revolutionary Court for trial as counter-revolutionaries.

[Signed] General Revolutionary Prosecutor of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Iran, 'Ali Qoddusi.

Reissue of Banknotes

WA150930 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 6 May 80 p 3

[Excerpts] Millions of rials worth of contraband 10,000-rial banknotes which were to be smuggled out of the southern part of the country by motor launch have been discovered by the Revolutionary Guards Corps. The banknotes discovered have been turned over to the Central Bank.

Asghar Kashani, chief of the Department of Banknote Printing of the Central Bank of Iran, commented on this subject as follows: After discovery of a great amount of contraband 10,000-rial banknotes, the Central Bank has decided to take them out of circulation to prevent exploitation by counterrevolutionaries who intended to harm the Islamic Revolution any way they could.

Kashani added that the contraband currency found contained 5,000-rial banknotes also which were to be smuggled out of the country. So far, there is no precise information about the 10,000-rial banknotes to be smuggled out of the country. For this reason, beginning today, the Central Bank will start distributing the new banknotes to replace the old ones.

'Ali Reza Nobari, director general of the Central Bank of Iran, regarding the recall of the old 10,000-rial banknotes, told our newsman the following:

If we consider the amount of 10,000-rial banknotes held by the public in 1978, we realize that the former regime in its last four months printed twice as many of these banknotes as was authorized--causing an inflation which the succeeding regime could not cope with.

TIMES INTERVIEWS RAFSANJANI ON ISLAMIC SOCIETY

WA141530 Tehran TIMES in English 21 Apr 80 p 1

[Article by Akbar Djavadi]

[Text] Tehran--The Islamic Republican Party (IRP) will enjoy a considerable majority in the Islamic Assembly and will try to pave the way for an Islamic set up in the country, said 'Ali Akhbar Hashem Rafsanjani yesterday.

In an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES he said the Assembly is the sovereign body to decide the future course of the nation.

Rafsanjani who was elected to the Assembly during the first phase of the general elections said, "The president has every right to appoint a cabinet but it's up to the parliament to approve or disapprove it."

Rafsanjani, a member of the powerful Revolutionary Council said he found no difference in the U.S. attitude towards Iran and pointed out that even before the hostage crisis they (Americans) were anxious and did whatever they could do for the shah for his refuge in various countries including Morocco and Mexico.

At that time the two countries were having so-called economic and political relations, he said and pointed out that even after the seizure of the U.S. Embassy there is no change in attitude in the behavior of the Americans.

Rafsanjani said that the Revolutionary Council is bound to back the students who occupy the embassy because the U.S. is against the Iranian revolution and freedom of Iran.

He said that it was wrong to say that the clergy did nothing for the revolution in Iran and pointed out that the Islamic courts played a vital role in safeguarding the revolution.

He complained that the hostage issue for the American leaders had become an election issue and added that those leaders were not bothered about the hostages as much as they appear to be. Rafsanjani said that such developments are possible in the U.S. because they do not have a solid spiritual and moral background.

He said that it was one of the main objectives of Islamic Iran to bring the whole Moslem world closer and Iran does not have the least idea of taking even an inch of land from any other country.

He said, "Arabs are our brothers and we are against the governments in Egypt and Iraq because they no more enjoy popularity in these countries."

Regarding the Irano-Soviet relations he said, "While we were involved in our issues with the U.S. that country attacked Afghanistan."

He said that Iran will not export gas to the Soviet Union at cheaper rates and pointed out that the shah had done so because he never cared about the interests of the Iranian nation.

Regarding the impact of the U.S. sanctions against Iran he said Iran is ready for all consequences. But he said that the Third World will assist Iran in meeting all its requirements.

Military actions of the U.S. will prove to be suicidal and lunatic for America.

Regarding the present unrest in the campuses he said the revolutionary changes are taking place in the whole country and so are they on the campuses.

AYATOLLAH KHOMEYNI DISCUSSES ANTI-ISLAMIC PLOTS

WA131500 Tehran TIMES in English 30 Apr 80 p 1

[Text] Tehran--The U.S. abortive attempt to release the hostages would have set fire to the area if it had not been crushed, said Imam Khomeyni yesterday.

In a message to his representative in Yazd Ayatollah Sadoqi, the imam stressed that necessary attention should be paid to the affairs which have happened because of the U.S. and its local and foreign agents.

Ayatollah Sadoqi recently wrote a letter to the imam in which he drew the imam's attention towards the latest developments in the country.

The imam also said that a thorough inquiry should be held about the recent explosions of bombs which claimed the lives of some "oppressed workers and toilers in the public places."

He said such action was done by the hands of those devilish agents and must be investigated thoroughly by the officials. He said the Iranians should also keep their eyes open.

The imam appreciated the services of Ayatollah Sadoqi which he rendered for the sake of Islam and appealed to him that he should inform the people of the area about their duties and responsibilities.

The imam said that the people should be alert and not fear this dastardly sabotage which was 100 per cent to the loss of the risen Iranian nation and to the interests of world predators, especially the defeated U.S.

The imam said that Almighty God is with us and we should continue to progress.

He said that I warn the people of Yazd and specially the dear youth that they should prevent the anti-clerical plot which is being hatched by anti-Islamic people and foreign agents.

He said the youth should raise their support of religious leaders.

AYATOLLAH KHAIKHALI DISCUSSES EMPLOYING SAVAKISTS

WA141700 Tehran TIMES in English 22 Apr 80 p 2

[Text] Tehran--Ayatollah Sadeq Khalkhali, a member of the Islamic Assembly elected from Qom, said yesterday that he was surprised and failed to understand the logic behind the employment of SAVAKists by some government organizations.

He was obviously referring to a report published in some sections of the press earlier in which it was said that the government intended to employ ex SAVAKists in certain governmental organizations.

Ayatollah Khalkhali said that it was contrary to the wishes of 35 million Iranians to take any ex SAVAKists into government service. He said that the nation wanted to put all such elements on trial and make sure that they receive revolutionary justice for their crimes.

Moreover, he said, when we are now talking of purging all anti revolutionary elements from government organizations including the foreign ministry and radio and TV it is simply unimaginable that such a decision could have been taken by government.

He further added that it was the common desire of the nation that a complete list of all SAVAKists be made public by the government. He added that the government should employ all young and true revolutionary Iranians who are adequately educated and are still unemployed and are facing hardships in their lives.

Speaking on the elections to the Islamic assembly Khalkhali said that any delay in the holding of elections for the second phase would have adverse effects on the Islamic Republic and would allow our enemies to inflict damaging blows on us. He said that the elections should be held as soon as possible so that the basic problems facing the nation could be solved without further delay.

Ayatollah Khalkhali added that the Revolutionary Council does not possess the same powers as would be vested in the first Islamic assembly and therefore cannot act the way the future assembly would be empowered to act.

He further said that the Revolutionary Council had not issued orders to the army commander who was recently stalled from taking a column through the Kurdish city of Sanandaj. Taking the council to task, he said, the army column should make a forced move through the city in compliance with government orders.

DR. BEHESHTI SPEAKS ON ISLAMIC REPUBLICAN PARTY

WA131600 Tehran TIMES in English 29-30 Apr 80 p 3

[Text] Why did not the officials of the IRP act according to their social responsibilities through the clerical current and how did they think of founding the party? How has the IRP functioned in a year? Was the creation of a popular base for its founders the purpose behind founding the party? Why has Dr. Beheshti not accepted the television debate with Rajavi?...

The above were among questions that Dr. Beheshti, head of the Supreme Court and member of the Revolutionary Council, answered in a gathering...in Mussa Ebne Ja'afar Mosque...

Motive Behind Founding Islamic Republican Party and Its Year-Old Function

"I should express the motive behind founding this party... It happens sometimes that some people think of founding a party to find supporters for themselves. Parties which were founded in many societies including Iran followed the same line. The question shows that the founders of the IRP could not have had such motives because those who announced the foundation of the party were not that baseless in society to try and find a base through founding a party.

"We did it considering a historic experience. In the history of our people, everytime our people rose...after victory an organized group of 200 or 5000 took all the achievements of the uprising and the general struggle of the people and led the struggle after the victory to whichever direction they wanted to, sometimes to the east, and sometimes to the West... We realized the necessity from the very beginning of attending to the scene of struggle...

"When we summed up and analyzed various topics after the August 19, 1953 coup... we reached the conclusion that in some cases...even the deceased Dr. Mossadeq was deprived of cooperation with an organized group which would have a line...

"That is why with our friends we were after creating a politically active Islamic organization. One of the valuable and interesting actions was creating the coalition boards organization of which one of the most effective sections was the Tehran section (early 60's)... It was about this time that these friends had asked the Imam for several clergy relied on by the imam to take charge of the religious responsibilities of this organized group and the Imam had approved four of us to take up this role...

"Of course the coalition boards experienced damage and then other organizations were created, organizations in which there was no one from the clergy. Two and a half years ago friends followed this idea again and especially the 1975 events and the certain announcement of positions which took place (Beheshti is referring to the take over and then the split from Mojahedin Khalq and some leftists worried us all and was a warning to us that organized movements should have an eligible and committed leadership and guidance... Seven, or eight months before victory we intended to announce the existence of such organizations. It was essential to inform the imam and we did.

"...He approved it in principle, but said it should be done in a way that no one is taken away from the daily responsibilities of the revolution and the tempo of the revolution had engaged us to the extent that we did not have more opportunity for this until after the victory of (Feb 11) when this was discussed with the imam again...he said yes it is a good thing to be done. [paragraph continues]

A couple of days went by and we had not yet announced it and our dear brother who had been to see the imam said when he returned that the imam had asked him what happened with the announcement, i.e. he felt the need so much...

"We intended to create a political and social Islamic organization... Second: An organization which would belong to all the people, old, young, men, women, urban, rural, worker, shop owner, engineers, doctors, teachers, students, clergy and all... Third: While it tries to be as widespread as possible and all-embracing, it should not be exclusivist... The IRP nominated several people for the experts assembly elections who were not members of the party and even one of those nominated opposed the velayat faghih (religious authority) in a speech and that is why our friends objected to us.

"...Our friends said they had voted for him because he had relied on him. The interesting point is that it is an organizational principle of the IRP not to be exclusivist (as it has shown in practice) but the exclusivists took up sticks and cried out that the party was exclusivist...

"In the past year, the IRP was functioning positively from the administrative viewpoint but negatively from another viewpoint and that it...organization and systematic ideological and political education... One of the reasons why the party was not successful enough in advancing political, educational and organizational feedback was because of the heavy responsibilities of the founders of the party.

"Membership of the Revolutionary Council from the beginning was comprised of all five of us... Then the experts assembly came up and it has not ended yet when the provisional government desired to leave...

"About the responsibility given to me by the imam recently, I said explicitly that "Sir, we are supposed to attend to these party affairs," but he emphatically said you must accept... As a result of the fact that we did not have enough strength in education and organization, supporters of the party did not follow the party behavior they should at times...

"We do not deny anything. We have said it many times, we also said it in the interviews that we want to confess. Of course confession is a bad word because it means that we did not want to tell everything but we are telling them now. No, we put everything to the people clearly. We have said many times it is possible that some of the friends and supporters of the IRP have not precisely observed the very advices, directives which we have stated in the paper of the party (Islamic Republic) or other places because we have not had enough time to brief our actions and ideology.

"And about the positive functions of the party: 1. Shattering the evil conception that the Moslems are not able to set up political-social-Islamic parties which rise up from the masses and in which the clergy are active participants... The question was several times put to me: "Do you really think such an organization would come into existence?" Even after the presidential elections some friends had, in their interviews made this unfriendly remark that after the presidential elections the IRP is dead.

"Majlis elections showed that this dead body is livelier than many alive ones. Thanks to the presence of you committed people, up to this moment more than half the deputies elected with an absolute majority are from the IRP slates, and many of those who have found their way into the second round are also from IRP slates."

Dr. Beheshti then made references to massive marches on Labor Day, Women's Day, Day of Nation's Solidarity with the Imam, and numerous marches against the great Satan and added: [paragraph continues]

"...If the party had not done anything else over the past year, one could at least have said that by introducing deputies who were also elected by you people, it did present a new constitution with a new content, the constitution against which plots were made by people who were identified through the revelations by the students.

"Some told us that we should scrap the experts assembly and the draft constitution, and put the same previous draft to a referendum - this was also put to the imam. What lay behind all this opposition? What were America's hands doing in all this?

"It is interesting to note that those running America's show in Iran are not embarrassed to say that the IRP is taking steps along the American line. I was recently in Bandar Abbas for a speech. Since it was the first time I had been there a large group of people came to me after the speech and asked me to forgive them, because they had never thought I would go there and speak to them! I then asked them if a clergyman and a Moslem could do anything else..."

Dr. Beheshti then spoke about the newspaper ISLAMIC REPUBLIC, saying that the paper is semi-independent: "Because we want some of the party organs to have more room for maneuver, for their talents to develop more. The paper has of course been suffering from many defects, but what is considerable is that the youths running it are children of the revolution... Some of those working at the paper work for 17 or 18 hours a day, they are also people who are ready to accept criticism, and that is the secret behind their progress..."

At the end of his speech Dr. Beheshti answered the question why he did not accept a debate with Massoud Rajavi. "This question," he said, "could be studied from three angles. One, the debate has been called for by someone who is himself the organization's representative and a Majlis candidate. Did he not know that candidates could not, at that time, appear on radio or television? If he did not know that, that should be considered political ignorance, which is bad. And if he did know that, then one must resort to God for help! Are we out to con each other? Was that an election propaganda ploy or a suggestion for a debate"...

Secondly, if there is to be a debate is it the Revolutionary Council's one year record which should be the subject of the debate or the subject of the debate or electric thought and a violation of Islamic morality? ...If there is to be a constructive debate between me and a socio-political organization which operates under the name of Islam... But is at the same time accused of having an election ideological line... and if this interview is to benefit people... then they, who claim to be following a pure Islamic doctrine, should at least choose that as the topic of discussion...

Thirdly, if it is the Revolutionary Council record which should be discussed why choose me? That should be left to the council to decide, i.e., the council should draw up its balance sheet and then appoint someone to defend it..." The meeting ended with the audience shouting "Hail to Beheshti, death to hypocrites."

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH INDIA

WA131700 Tehran TIMES in English 22 Apr 80 p 2

[Text] Tehran--Iran and India have signed a multimillion dollar agreement for facilities in the automobile industry, it was announced yesterday by top Indian businessman Maninder Singh Sethi.

Sethi said that India's leading engineering company Mahindra and Mahindra after a long negotiations through his efforts signed an agreement with Iran Jeep for the provision of technical cooperation in the production and manufacturing of jeeps in Iran.

Sethi who has vast experience in technical fields of Iran told the TEHRAN TIMES that a liaison is now being set up by him to cater for shortages in Iran and will make adequate provision for technical know-how in the Irano-Indian joint ventures.

He said such cooperation was necessary especially at a time when the imperialist powers are trying to bring pressure on Iran.

"Iran and India have a long history of mutual cooperation in cultural, economic and scientific fields and it is now the duty of Indians to come forward to join hands with their Iranian brothers," he remarked.

He said the recent agreement between the two countries will provide enormous opportunities for bilateral cooperation. He said that Mahindra and Mahindra is one of top companies of India and can well provide technical assistance to Iran in the engineering fields.

Mahindra and Mahindra owns several leading industrial units of India involved in the manufacture of Jeeps, International Tractors, OTIS Passenger Lifts, Rubery Owen Trailers, Special Steels and Electro Chemical Products, etc.

Sethi said that efforts are being made to introduce other engineering companies of India for closer cooperation with their Iranian counterparts.

He said that such cooperation will be maintained both in the private and public sectors.

Leading companies which are expected to start operations in Iran in cooperation through him with their Iranian brothers will concentrate on fields connected with household and engineering goods, basic raw materials, fabricated products, chemicals, food products and general merchandise, he said.

Sethi said the liaison which has been set up will bring a better understanding between Iranians and Indians and will make proper provisions for quality control, assurances in meeting shipping schedules and availability of information and prices off hand to Iranian buyers and industrialists.

The new enterprise will also provide technical knowhow and industrial consultancy services to interested parties who are interested in the medium and small scale industry. Sethi said that, in similar lines like in India, for self-sufficiency reasons Iran has to expand the industry and has to explore the craftsmanship in the rural population. This will not only create more jobs but also the genius and the industrial minded hidden talents will be given their chance to express and prove their abilities and worthiness.

He said, his company would provide details and assistance for setting-up of small industrial units as well as cottage industries in rural areas of Iran thus providing jobs and take a step towards industrial self-sufficiency in this country.

With the natural and historical bond existing between India and Iran, who have been linked since the emergence of Aryans, Sethi said that both countries had a common way of life, religious attachments and linguistic similarities.

He added further that with the presence of several thousand Iranian students in India and due to the engagement in Iran of Indian doctors, engineers, architects and tradesmen who are helping Iran in its health, welfare, industrial and construction projects, there are enough reasons to believe that this historical bond opens numerous avenues for these two progressive nations to join hands together. Presently Sethi is planning to arrange for the visits of various Indian delegations to open new chapters of cooperation and on finalization of various details will arrange for Iranian delegations to visit India and acquaint themselves with the products and services available through Indian firms of repute. It is hoped that both Indian firms and Iranian traders will tremendously benefit from this challenging effort of Sethi, who has promised to keep us informed on further brilliant achievements of India in Iran.